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**Letter dated 6 June 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter addressed to you from Tekeda Alemu, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Fesseha A. **Tessema**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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## Annex to the letter dated 6 June 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you to bring to your attention the very critical and dangerous situation faced by Ethiopian nationals in Eritrea.

The extreme form of human rights violations suffered by Ethiopians over the last two years at the hands of the Eritrean Government has so far never been given sufficient attention by the international community. This, despite the fact that nearly everyone knows that these violations have taken place and that Eritrea has continued to refuse to abide by the principles of humanitarian law. That Eritrea still refuses to give access to the International Committee of the Red Cross to Ethiopian prisoners of war is widely known, and is also widely ignored. This is a source of deep disappointment for the Ethiopian Government and for the Ethiopian people.

In the meantime, the human rights situation faced by Ethiopian nationals in Eritrea is worsening, and the latest information on the matter makes it clear that the lives of thousands of Ethiopians in Eritrea are in immediate danger. According to reliable information reaching us directly from Eritrea, the defeat on the battleground has only encouraged the Eritrean regime and its followers to intensify their crimes against Ethiopians who have the misfortune of living in Eritrea. The following represent only the most recent examples of cruelty witnessed in Eritrea:

- Seventy-nine (79) Ethiopians residing in Asmara, Keren, AdiGuadad, AdiNefas and Durfo have been killed in barbaric fashion;
- Abductions from home and places of work have become common for Ethiopians:

  1,758 from Mendefera;
  3,000 from Mitsiwa (Massawa);
  1,394 from Dekemehari;
  1,337 from Keren;

- More than 5,000 Ethiopians have been arbitrarily detained in detention camps around Asmara called "Sheketi" and "Maihabar". Thousands have been moved to neighbourhood (Kebele) detention centres and temporarily converted cinema halls;
- Torture is the daily experience of Ethiopians in detention camps and elsewhere:
  - An Ethiopian called Teklu Kebede was severely beaten on 13 May and his family, including his four children, were arrested;
  - On 16 May 2000, an Ethiopian butcher was severely beaten with three colleagues on the road to Mitsiwa. His shop and car were destroyed by government-instigated mobs;
  - On 16 May 2000, more than 100 Ethiopian daily labourers working in an organization called Asbeco were beaten and forced to walk barefoot. Their whereabouts are still unknown;

- Ethiopians residing in Asmara localities such as Gejeret, Maichuhet, Akria and Idaga Arbi were beaten severely on 17 May 2000. Some have lost their sight.

You will agree with me that such conduct instigated and carried out by the regime and its supporters cannot go unchecked and unpunished.

We appeal to you to assist these Ethiopians who are at risk and who are at the mercy of a defeated and desperate Government that cares little for principles of humanitarian law.

(*Signed*) Tekeda **Alemu**
Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs